

How long does it take to process Social Security Disability claims?

An application for Social Security Disability can take from 6 weeks to several years to handle, depending on a variety of factors.

[Click here to find detailed information about this process](#)

[Click here to find your local Social Security office](#)

The times below are merely estimates, but represent what people in the 3rd District have experienced over the past few years:

Initial Processing - 6 to 8 weeks

- Some cases are approved in this first step. If your case is denied at this level, you are encouraged to apply for Reconsideration.

Reconsideration - 6 to 8 weeks

- Like the Initial Processing, this is all done through paperwork. If your case is denied here, you are encouraged to request a hearing in front of an Administration Law Judge.

Hearings and Appeals - 9 to 12 months

- An Administrative Law Judge will hear your claim at this level. It usually takes 9 to 12 months to get a hearing. It can take a few months longer to get a decision. You may want to get an attorney or other qualified individual to help represent you in your hearing. If you are denied at this level, you can appeal your case to the Appeals Council.

Appeals Council - 24 to 36 months

- If your claim is not approved by the Appeals Council, your only option is to file a lawsuit if you want to continue your claim.